EPA • U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS • ILLINOIS EPA

STATUS REPORT

U.S. EPA • Region V • 230 South Dearborn • Chicago, IL • January 1985

OMC HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
WAUKEGAN, IL

SITE

Outboard Marine Corporation

LOCATION

Waukegan Harbor, Waukegan, Illinois

PURPOSE OF THIS STATUS REPORT

To bring the public up-to-date on recent planning and design activities that are being done to clean up the site's PCB problem.

PROBLEM

In 1976, the U.S. EPA discovered that the Outboard Marine Corporation (OMC) was discharging PCB's into the Waukegan Harbor. These PCB's have contributed to the contamination of Lake Michigan and have entered the food chain in the area. (See "PCB's: What are They?")

WHAT WAS DONE

Upon discovery, the U.S. EPA began an investigation of the harbor's PCB problem. These studies found the highest concentrations were in *Slip No. 3*, the *Upper Harbor*, an OMC *parking lot* north of the plant, and in a drainage area called the *North Ditch*(Figure 1). The U.S. EPA and the Illinois EPA subsequently directed various legal actions against OMC while the agencies continued their investigation.

CLEANUP PLAN

In the summer of 1984, the in-depth investigations at the site yielded several cleanup plans that were then reviewed for their environmental and cost-effectiveness in a Feasibility Study. Public meetings were then held to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the various plans. The discussions and debates were extremely intense and time-consuming because of the tremendous public interest and the complexity of the site's problems. A record of decision (ROD) was the outcome of this process, and it yielded the following plan. The plan addresses the four contaminated areas mentioned above and outlines five steps for their cleanup.

Step No. 1

PCB hot spots in Slip No. 3 (areas with concentrations greater than 10,000 parts per million (ppm) will be dredged. The dredged material will then be solidified and sent offsite to a chemical waste landfill licensed to handle PCB's. This action would remove approximately 92 percent of all PCB's in the Slip No. 3 and Upper Harbor areas.

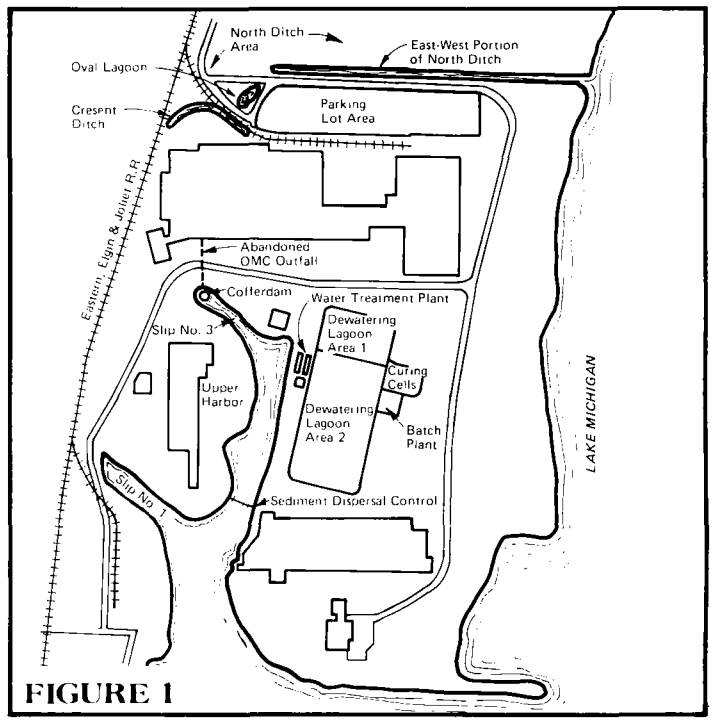

FIGURE 1

Step No. 2

Sediments with concentrations greater than 1,000 ppm in Slip No. 3 will be pumped to *Area 1* of the *Dewatering Lagoon* and treated prior to disposal in the parking lot. Sediment from the Upper Harbor with concentrations between 50 and 1,000 ppm will be pumped to *Area 2*. Water from this lagoon will be allowed to evaporate, leaving PCB-contaminated solids that will then be disposed of in the parking lot. This action would remove approximately 7 percent of the PCB's in the Slip No. 3 and Upper Harbor areas.

Step No. 3

The most highly contaminated soil will be excavated from the *Crescent Ditch* and *Oval Lagoon* in the North Ditch area. Soils in this area have PCB concentrations in excess of 10,000 ppm. These excavated soils will then be disposed of at an offsite chemical waste landfill licensed to handle PCB's. This action would remove approximately 89 percent of all PCB's in the North Ditch area.

PCB's; WHAT ARE THEY?

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB's) — are a family of organic compounds used since 1926 in electric transformers as insulators and coolants, in lubricants, carbonless copy paper, adhesives, and caulking compounds. They are also produced in certain combustion processes. PCB's are extremely persistent in the environment because they do not break down into new and less harmful chemicals. PCB's are stored in the fatty tissues of humans and animals through the bioaccumulation process. EPA banned the use of PCB's in 1976. In general, PCB's are not as toxic in acute short-term doses as some other chemicals, although acute and chronic exposure can cause liver damage. PCB's have also caused cancer in laboratory animals. When tested, most people show traces of PCB's in their blood and fatty tissues.

Step No. 4

The remaining contaminated soil in the North Ditch area will then be contained with a slurry wall and capped with clay. A drainage pipe to Lake Michigan also will be installed along the route of the east-west portion of the North Ditch, allowing runoff from the parking lot and ground surfaces to bypass the site.

Step No. 5

The solids dredged from Slip No. 3 and the Upper Harbor during Step No. 2 will be placed in the parking lot. The PCB-contaminated materials in the lot will then be graded, compacted, contained by a slurry wall, capped with clay, and then covered with pavement.

The entire project, which is financed by U.S. EPA's Superfund, has been estimated to cost $21,250,000.

DESIGN PROCEDURE

According to federal regulations, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for implementing Superfund cleanup projects. After a six-month selection process they selected Warzyn Engineering, Inc., as the design contractor. They began work on the plans and specifications and expect to finish this summer. The Corps and the U.S. EPA will then review the design. After the design is finished, the Corps will solicit competitive bids for the actual construction of the project.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

By early spring the design will be 30 percent complete, and by summer, it should be 100 percent complete. Construction bids will be accepted following the completion of the design and actual construction should begin during late fall 1985.

LEGAL ISSUES

The 1978 lawsuit brought against the OMC by the United States, (and later joined by the Illinois EPA) is still pending.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the site, you may call or write:

Vanessa Musgrave
U.S. EPA Community Relations Coordinator
(312) 886-6128

Dan Caplice
U.S. EPA Remedial Project Manager
(312) 886-0397

U.S. EPA Region V
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604

Bob Smart
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
(402)
Omaha Office

Louis Vasseur
Environmental Officer
(312) 249-5410
City of Waukegan
1101 Belvidere Street
Waukegan, IL 60085

U.S. EPA Region V
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604